

pleased to play a part, the House without requesting a conference adopted significantly altered versions of House-approved civil rights bills. I am convinced that this measure approved in the Senate by 29 Senators of my party and 42 Democratic Senators is sound and just legislation.

I also fully recognize, Mr. Chairman, that like most complex bills, H.R. 2516 in its present status is not perfect in every detail. It does, however, seek to protect certain fundamental rights and to assure equality of opportunity for all of our citizens.

Members of this committee earlier today have expressed the thought that the passage of this bill would result in the deprivation of certain existing rights to dispose of property. I would like to put the converse of that observation.

Mr. Chairman, to me it must be a very deep affront to human dignity for any American to find that even though his bank balance is ample, his credit rating good, his character and that of all members of his family above reproach, he still cannot buy or rent better housing in a better neighborhood because of the color of his skin.

I recall in history reading of societies where a certain class of people were not permitted to own certain properties. Those societies were sick societies in my opinion.

Some questions have been raised regarding the various new sections incorporated in the Senate bill. Title I, the antiriot section, embraces areas covered in H.R. 1516 and H.R. 421, both of which passed the House in 1967. Members of my party serving on the Judiciary Committee of the House expressed the view that these measures should be combined. And the Senate has adopted this approach.

With respect to the sections added by the Senate dealing with the rights of American Indians and with certain limited control of firearms, I fully appreciate that appropriate bodies of the House have not completed their consideration of these areas of legislation. And that the procedure which I advocate is in many respects an unusual procedure.

I do share the reservations of many of our colleagues with respect to the draftsmanship of the Senate bill. But, Mr. Chairman, I also have the deep conviction that it is urgent for our Nation that effective open housing legislation be passed promptly.

This matter of simple justice in my opinion has been too long denied to some of our American citizens.

Mr. Chairman, weighing all considerations in the balance, it is my judgment that the open housing bill should not be exposed to further delay and further uncertainty which in my judgment would occur were the bill to be submitted to a joint conference of the House and Senate.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. MacGregor, isn't that the ordinary, the usual procedure when the two bodies pass different, divergent bills, they send them to conference?

Mr. MACGREGOR. I am sure it is, Mr. Chairman. And yet the procedure that I advocate is not unique. It has occurred before and it has been deemed to be appropriate in those circumstances on previous occasions.

The CHAIRMAN. I know you are a very fair man, as well as a very able man.